



Focus

Port of Olympia – Department of Ecology Cascade Pole cleanup project

Background

From 1957 to 1986, the Cascade Pole Company operated a wood-treating facility on property leased from the Port of Olympia. Prior to that time, several other wood-treating businesses operated at the site, which is on North Washington Street at the northern end of the Port of Olympia peninsula, between the east and west bays of Budd Inlet.

Investigations from 1986 through 1995 revealed a variety of toxic substances in soils, ground water, surface water, intertidal sediments, and marine organisms at the site. These toxic substances include polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs, which are key chemical constituents of creosote, a wood-preserving compound), pentachlorophenol (PCP, which is another wood-preserving compound), volatile hydrocarbons, and dioxins. Some of these substances are suspected human carcinogens.

Groundwater protection, site containment

In 1993, Cascade Pole installed a pump/treat system to extract, treat and control the spread of contaminated ground water. The system consists of a physical and biological treatment of the contaminated water, which is then filtered through activated carbon units. The effluent from the treatment system is discharged into Budd Inlet under a National Pollution Discharge Elimination System permit. Between 1993 and 1999, approximately 48 million gallons of contaminated water were treated, and more than 7,500 gallons of wood preserving products (60,000 pounds) were recovered from the ground water.

In 1993, a 350-foot sheet-pile wall was installed along the shoreline to prevent releases of wood-treating product into Budd Inlet from the hot-spot area of the highest contamination. In 1996-97, a 3,528-foot long (0.67 mile) slurry wall was constructed surrounding the upland contamination. The slurry wall is basically an underground wall with an average depth of 23 feet. The slurry wall and the sheet pile wall are tied together to completely surround and block the spread of the subsurface contamination.

What will be done in the future?

Based on sampling data and investigation, approximately 32,000 cubic yards of sediment will be excavated from Budd Inlet and replaced with clean sediment. The contaminated sediment will be stored in a containment cell on the upland Cascade Pole site, and it will be eventually capped. Construction of the containment cell is currently under way and is expected to be finished by the end of September 2000. Sediment excavation is scheduled to happen next summer. After that, the containment cell will be filled and eventually sealed.

Long-term monitoring of sediment, ground-water recovery and treatment, and contaminant (free-product) recovery will be part of the future long-term monitoring and treatment plans for the site. Steam-injection technology is being considered for use in cleaning the contaminated soils.

Contacts for more information

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